AP Language English - Summer Reading Assignment

Following are the required reading materials for the summer. You must have the reading and assignments completed and ready to turn in on the first day of class. As you read, you must take notes. They must be handwritten and in a notebook that will be turned in on the first day of class.

1) Book of Acts(from the Bible)

3) *Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls

Specific directions on notes:

1. *Acts of the Apostles*. Put notes in three columns. First column: A QUOTE that stood out to you from each chapter. This might be one verse or several. Second column: NOTES: One main idea from the chapter. Third column: QUESTIONS: a question or an observation you had on the chapter. The question may not have an easy or obvious answer, such as “Why did God allow Stephen to be stoned?”

(You might be wondering why I chose this book of the Bible--why not another? This book has many unique stylistic qualities. About halfway through you will realize that the history has become a memoir! . . . That leads to the second book--a memoir.)

3. *Glass Castle*

*Two things! A QNQ and a set of discussion questions:*

I want you to do some QNQs here as well, but don’t feel you need one per chapter. Column One: QUOTES: When you run across a sentence that really stands out, either for the idea expressed or the way it is phrased, make a mark in the book and later write it down. In the NOTES column, put down the context or explain what the quotation means. In the QUESTION column, write down why you chose it. I’d like to see 10 QNQs total for the book. (Realize that the purpose here is to look not just at WHAT is being said, but HOW. Look at the use of language!).

Then complete this set of questions that came from

<http://www.hcths.com/downloads/glasscastle.pdf>

All of your answers should be several sentences long, demonstrate a careful reading of the book, and a mastery of composition skills and Standard English usage. Sometimes you can answer several of the questions together in one response, and some questions cannot be fully answered until you finish the novel.

1. The first story Walls tells of her childhood is that of burning herself severely at age three, and of her father taking her away from the hospital. Why do you think she opens with that story? How does it set the stage for the rest of the memoir?

2. Rex Walls often asks his children, “Have I ever let you down?” Why was this question, and its required response, so important to him and to his children? On what occasions does he actually not let them down?

3. Jeannette’s mother insists that, no matter what, “life with your father was never boring.” What kind of man is Rex Walls? What were his strengths and weaknesses, his flaws and contradictions?

4. Write about the roles of empathy, compassion, and understanding are some the the larger themes of the story using references and page numbers.

5. Although it portrays an incredibly difficult life, The Glass Castle is not about feeling sad or self-pitying. Explain what you think is the tone of the book, and discuss how Walls achieves this effect.

6. Describe Jeannette’s relationships with her siblings. Discuss the roles they play in each others’ lives.

7. In college, Jeannette is singled out by a professor as not understanding the plight of homeless people. Instead of defending herself, she keeps quiet. Why do you think she does this?

8. The two major sections of the memoir, one set in the desert and one in West Virginia, feel distinct from one another. What effect does such a big move have on the family, and on your reading of the story? How would you describe the shift in the book’s tone?

9. Were you surprised to learn that, as adults, Jeannette and her siblings remain close to their parents? Why or why not? Why do you think they stay close?

10. What character traits do you think Jeannette inherited from her parents? Offer supporting examples. How do those traits shape her life?

11. Despite everything, Jeannette refuses to condemn her parents. Were you able, as a reader, to remain equally nonjudgmental? Why or why not?

12. Which scenes in the book are the most memorable to you? Most shocking? Most inspiring? Funniest? Explain your answers.

13. Discuss the metaphor of the glass castle, and what it signifies to Jeannette and to her father. What does it signify that, just before leaving for New York, Jeannette tells her father she doesn’t believe he’ll ever build it? Explain.